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NEWS

Winchester musicians join the School of HONK

XIYUE ERIC HAN | CORRESPONDENT

September 1, 2025 . 7:30 PM — 3 min read

Winchester musicians came out on Aug. 24 to join the School of HONK in making an instant musical festival. The group met up at the Griffin Museum and marched to the Town Common. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTO/XIYUE ERIC HAN

The sound of brass, reeds, and drums filled the quiet streets of Winchester in late August, turning an ordinary summer afternoon into a mu festival.

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As the School of HONK marched forward, trombones blared, trumpets soared, and the joy of music infected more and more people. With over 80 players of all ages, backgrounds, instruments and abilities, School of HONK was impossible to ignore as the group marched from its meet-up spot at the Griffin Museum to the Town Common.

Winchester residents play the trombones during rehearsals at the Griffin Museum. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTO/XIYUE ERIC HAN

The School of HONK is a crazily inclusive street-band music school in which anyone of any age and level of musical proficiency can sign up and play, from professional musicians to someone who is just beginning to play an instrument for the first time. The band learns simple tunes by ear and with the help of others, and then makes them into happy, improvised parades through the neighborhood, valuing fun over perfection.

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For the musicians, the joy of music is everywhere.

“Playing with HONK feels like freedom,” said Timothy Peters, a dancer and drums player. “There is an air of inclusivity here, and an ‘everyone can play’, type of mentality. It’s all about trying something new.”

To Peters, music is incredibly important for both individuals and societies.

“All throughout human history we have been making music,” he said. “It is a way to connect with others, socialize and feel emotion.”

Around him, players of all ages, some who have been playing for years, while others are picking up an instrument for the first time combined to bring music and joy to others.

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Winchester musicians of all ages and abilities marched from the Griffin Museum to the Town Common during a special performance with the School of HONK on Aug. 24. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTO/XIYUE ERIC HAN

Maureen Mansfield joined the School of HONK band for the first time. However, this wasn't her first time playing an instrument.

"I started playing back in fourth grade and I chose the saxophone because it is so versatile and I have really been playing ever since," remarked Mansfield. "Music is really special with its ability to bring joy to others; it is kind of like a universal language."

As the band marched, the crowd clapped, and swayed to the rhythm of the songs. Many different people came and went throughout the parade, stopping for a moment to enjoy the music before moving on with their day.

"I was on my way to grab some water, and before I knew it I was in the middle of a whole music parade," said Seojun Ryu. "Who knew some simple tunes can turn around a mundane afternoon."

For one day, Winchester was transformed. Not by a professional concert hall performance, but by a group of friends and strangers making music on the streets in order to put smiles on people's faces.

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Check out more about the School of HONK here.

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'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

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Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents 'Syldason: You Are Welcome Here'

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

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